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Economic and Social Council

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Organizational Session for 2003

Provisional summary record of the 5th meeting
Held at Headquarters, New York, on Wednesday, 5 March 2003, at 10.30 a.m.

President: Mr. Rosenthal ..... (Guatemala)

Contents

Report on the preparations for the spring meeting with the Bretton Woods institutions and the World Trade Organization

Adoption of the agenda and other organizational matters (*continued*)

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The meeting was called to order at 10.50 a.m.

Report on the preparations for the spring meeting with the Bretton Woods institutions and the World Trade Organization

1. **The Chairman** said that, in accordance with paragraph 69 of the Monterrey Consensus, he had been actively engaged in preparations for the spring meeting with the Bretton Woods institutions and the World Trade Organization (WTO) to be held in New York on 14 April 2003. Informal consultations on the content, format, scope and desired outcome of the meeting had been held with senior representatives of those bodies, who were eager to further the momentum begun at Monterrey. Moreover, they were responding favourably to the crucial issue of high-level representation at the spring meeting. Indeed, the Bretton Woods institutions and WTO could play a crucial role in rallying senior government representatives and other national stakeholders involved in Monterrey Conference follow-up. The meeting would provide an important opportunity for interaction between policy makers in the areas of finance, trade, development cooperation, trade and foreign affairs. The primary aim was genuine, free-flowing and interactive dialogue, qualitatively different from any held previously.

2. The proposed format for the meeting had been circulated to Council members. At an opening plenary meeting, a panel of key speakers would provide an institutional view of the general theme: "Implementation of the Monterrey Consensus a year after Monterrey". Four mixed round tables would follow, chaired by United Nations, IMF, World Bank and WTO representatives. Lunch with a keynote speaker would be followed by a resumed plenary meeting and concluding meeting, with reports from the round table chairpersons. Civil society representatives would be invited to participate in the afternoon plenary meeting.

3. As further preparation for the meeting, the Council would also be holding an informal, open-ended meeting with the institutional stakeholders. The success of the spring meeting would be measured by the palpable engagement of all participants, allowing for meaningful input to the fifty-eighth session of the General Assembly.

Adoption of the agenda and other organizational matters (*continued*)

Theme for the humanitarian affairs segment of the 2003 substantive session of the Economic and Social Council

4. **The President** said that, after informal consultations, the following theme had been selected for the humanitarian affairs segment of the 2003 substantive session: "Strengthening of the coordination of United Nations humanitarian assistance, with particular attention to: (a) humanitarian financing and effectiveness of humanitarian assistance; (b) transition from relief to development". The Council would also hold a panel, within the framework of the theme, on "Responding to the effects of HIV/AIDS and other widespread diseases on humanitarian relief operations".

5. **Mr. Bouchara** (Observer for Morocco), speaking on behalf of the Group of 77 and China, said that the choice of theme represented a satisfactory compromise and showed a general desire to be constructive and positive.

6. **Mr. Psiachas** (Greece), speaking on behalf of the European Union, paid a tribute to the remarkable spirit of understanding and cooperation shown during the consultations, which he hoped would continue.

7. *The Council took note of the theme for the humanitarian affairs segment of its 2003 substantive session*

Programme of work of the operational activities segment of the substantive session of 2003

8. **The President** drew attention to the detailed programme of work for the operational activities segment of the 2003 substantive session, which represented the outcome of informal consultations.

9. *The Council took note of the detailed programme of work for the operational activities segment of the 2003 substantive session.*

Participation of intergovernmental organizations in the work of the Council (E/2002/3, E/2003/10)

10. **The President** drew attention to the applications for observer status with the Council submitted by the Intergovernmental Institution for the Use of Micro-alga Spirulina against Malnutrition and by the Common Fund for Commodities.

11. *The Council decided to grant observer status to the Intergovernmental Institution for the Use of Micro-alga Spirulina against Malnutrition and to the Common Fund for Commodities.*

Change of date and venue of the eleventh meeting of the Ad Hoc Group of Experts on International Cooperation in Tax Matters

12. **The President** recalled that the Council, by its decision 2002/231 of 23 July 2002, had agreed to the holding of the eleventh meeting of the Ad Hoc Group of Experts on International Cooperation in Tax Matters in 2003. The meeting had originally been scheduled to take place in New York from 7 to 11 April 2003; it was now proposed that the Group should meet in Geneva from 10 to 14 November 2003.

13. **Mr. de Barros** (Secretary of the Council) said that there would be no programme budget implications.

14. **The Chairman** said he took it that the Council approved the change of venue.

15. *It was so decided.*

Letter from the President of the Economic and Social Council to the Secretary-General of the United Nations (E/2003/12)

16. **The President** recalled that resolution 2002/24 had authorized him to appoint from among States members of the Council, in consultation with the Chairmen of the regional groups, the members of the Committee on Negotiations with Intergovernmental Agencies. He invited members to take note of the letter informing the Secretary-General of the appointment of the members of the Committee contained in document E/2003/12. He would like to establish the Committee's membership as soon as possible so that it could begin its work by the end of March.

17. **Mr. Talbot** (Observer for Guyana) asked whether a programme of work for the Committee had been established and whether there was a time frame for its completion.

18. **The President** said that the Committee would aim to complete its work before the beginning of the substantive session of the Council.

19. **Ms. Houngbedji** (Benin) asked whether membership in the Committee would be open-ended or limited.

20. **The President** said that the Council had decided that the membership would be limited, but be representative of the regional groups. In addition to the countries listed in his letter, Senegal, Ethiopia, Nigeria and Chile had expressed interest in participating.

21. **Mr. Benmellouk** (Observer for Morocco), speaking on behalf of the Group of 77 and China, requested time for consultation with the other members of the Group.

The meeting was suspended at 11.50 a.m. and resumed at 12.35 p.m.

22. **Mr. Benmellouk** (Observer for Morocco), speaking on behalf of the Group of 77 and China, requested that the decision on that matter should be deferred for two weeks to allow more thorough consultations.

23. *It was so decided.*

The meeting rose at 12.45 p.m.